

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-16 are pending in the present application.

***Examiner's Interview***

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for her time during the interview on April 17, 2008. Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to them in this application. Although an agreement could not be reached, Applicants understand that should all the claims directed to the elected invention be in condition for allowance, the nonelected claims will be considered for rejoinder.

***Restriction Requirement***

The Examiner has required election in the present application between:

Group I, claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-15; and

Group II, claims 5, 9 and 16.

**For the purpose of examination of the present application, Applicants elect, with traverse, Group I, Claims 1-4, 6-8 and 10-15.**

Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement. According to MPEP 803, if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without a serious burden, the Examiner *must* examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions. Since Group I (claims 1-4, 6-8, and 10-15, directed to an extensible composite member) and Group II (claims 5, 9, and 16, which are methods of making the extensible composite member) are so closely related in subject matter, the Examiner is

necessarily searching Group II when conducting a search for Group I. Thus, the additional group identified by the Examiner could efficiently be examined in this application along with the elected invention without undue burden on the Examiner or the USPTO.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully remind the Examiner that should all the claims directed to the elected invention be in condition for allowance, the non-elected claims should be considered for rejoinder. (See MPEP 821.04(b)).

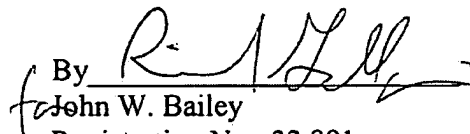
### **CONCLUSION**

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Bailey (Reg. No. 32,881) at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: April 24, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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